



CLINIC CRIER

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From the Commanding Officer: Captain Kathleen D. Morrison, MSC, USN

Happy Holidays Shipmates!

Your community outreach for the Thanksgiving Baskets for the Annapolis Area needy was outstanding! We were part of the most successful food drive in this area—1100 baskets! The annual USMC Toys for TOTS drive is underway—one of many ways to support others during this Holiday season. Although many enjoyed an extended Thanksgiving weekend, I want to give personal thanks to the duty crews, PCC staff, lab/x-ray/pharmacy staff for their dedication over the 4 days. The same type of support will be necessary in December/January. Thank you for helping each other by ensuring that our patients have maximum access to quality health care and also that each staff member receives some well-deserved liberty time.

As well as our day to day operations, we continue to focus on PRECOMS '01, TRICARE initiatives, training, Y2K compliance, and upcoming DODMERBS physicals. All these issues require our patience, problem solving innovation and communication! The ESC really appreciates your superb feedback on the NMCLA Strategic Plan. Please ask your Directors about the Annual Planning Goals progress reports.

One of our command goals is to be

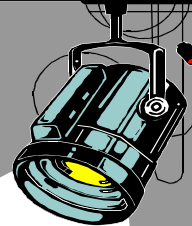
inspection ready at all times. We are currently entering the time period that JCAHO inspectors can arrive unannounced to NMCLA. Environment of Care, Information Management (Patient information), performance improvement documentation are key areas we need to maintain the momentum! We will be receiving a final IG date shortly. It appears that the next inspection will be a combination JCAHO/IG thus avoiding the duplicate efforts of getting ready for 2 separate inspections. Do you remember our preparations when we surveyed our space life safety (storage), patient confidentiality, and medical record documentation? We need to maintain those efforts.

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season filled with family and friends. Please take care when traveling and enjoying the holiday activities—each one of you has made a difference for so many! Thanks for taking care of shipmates, especially if they won't be with loved ones during this Holiday season.

Blessings
R/CO



Civilian Spotlight Sheila Buist



Ms. Sheila Buist, Clinical Laboratory Technical Advisor, was hired by NMCL Annapolis during the Gulf War in 1990. This, however, was not the first time that Ms. Buist was serving the Navy during a time of conflict. You see, in 1967, just 2 weeks into her first assignment as a Naval Lab Officer, she was sent to Guam to run the lab for the hospital's annex. A move that she would later find out was in anticipation for the Tet Offensive. While she describes the time as a lot of work, she says it was all very interesting.

Guam also had another distinction, for it was there she met and married Warrant Officer Andrew Buist of the Guam Security Group. Knowing that they would never get concurrent orders, Ms. Buist opted to work instead in government service.

Ms. Buist has done so for the last 18 yrs, with a 4 year gap, in such places as Japan, Fort Ord, California and Walter Reed Army Hospital. She came to work at Annapolis, after relocating here in 1988, and did so because she loves the town. Ms. Buist also says that she, "likes working with the Navy, because it is where my heart is."

Ms. Buist enjoys working with the Midshipmen and claims that it "keeps her young". She plans to retire in 2002 to Colorado Springs where she will, "sponsor Air Force Cadets and wear Navy Sweatshirts to drive them crazy."

What's in store this month?

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Y2Korner

Recommended Family Y2K Preparations

As the new year approaches it would be wise for you and your family to take a few precautions. Common sense steps can guard against the unlikely but possible inconveniences that may occur as we move to and through Y2K. Some services and utility providers may experience temporary isolated disruptions; however, widespread, long-term incidents should not occur. Most actions you should take are similar to preparations for a winter storm. Consider other actions to include advance record keeping (financial, medical, insurance, personal,) to accurately document your current status. Should disruptions occur, you will be prepared. And - don't forget elderly relatives and neighbors who may need your assistance.

Finances

Financial Considerations. The best advice is to keep your money where it is (e.g., bank, credit union, stocks and securities). Beware of scams that prey on Y2K fears. Keep good paper records of accounts and bank statements, especially those for the last few months of 1999 and the first few months of 2000, so you can easily compare and resolve any administrative errors that might occur.

Credit and Debit Cards. The credit card industry has worked with thoroughness to resolve Y2K problems. However, some billing and other errors may occur. Hold on to all credit-card receipts and compare them with charges that appear in your statement in the months just prior to and following January 1. Also check to ensure your payments are properly credited, and you are not assessed unwarranted late-payment fees.

Credit Ratings. If you haven't obtained a credit report within the past year, obtain a copy of your credit

report in 1999, and if you spot a problem, request that it be corrected promptly. Then, in 2000, obtain another copy of your updated report and check again for errors. To request your credit report, call any of the nation's three major credit bureaus at these toll-free numbers: Equifax at 800-685-1111, Experian at 800-682-7654, and Trans Union at 800-888-4213. Expect to pay \$5 to \$10 for each report.

Home-Banking. Make sure your computer and banking software is Y2K compliant. Most computer and software manufacturers have web sites on their products' readiness. Keep a back-up disk of your records.

Cash-on-Hand. It is recommended to have about a week's worth of cash on hand. The Federal Reserve has ordered an additional \$50 billion in the event people make a run on banks and ATMs late in the year. However, you are cautioned against having too much cash-on-hand, so that you do not invite trouble.

Transportation and Travel

Automobiles. Cars and trucks should be unaffected by Y2K; their microprocessors generally recognize time only in the passing of milliseconds, not in years. Ensure your service records are complete in case your repair shop loses data files.

Gasoline Availability - An industry survey indicates that gasoline and oil companies should be well prepared for Y2K. Year-end gasoline lines and shortages could result from large numbers of people filling up just before the millennium. Many oil companies are increasing reserves to address this possibility. To avoid needing a large quantity of gasoline at the end of the year and to reduce the probability of long lines, get in the habit of refilling your fuel tank when the gauge reaches one-half. Storing large quantities of gasoline is never a good habit.

Aviation. All FAA systems have been declared Y2K compliant. Up-to-date information may be obtained from the FAA web site

(www.faa.gov).

Trains, Subways, and Buses. Computer glitches may disable some traffic-control systems, communications systems, and electrical systems. Buses are less susceptible to Y2K problems. Personal contingency plans and alternatives should be considered.

Computerized Reservations Systems. Most nationwide systems have been certified Y2K ready. However, you should request written confirmation of bookings, including acknowledgment of advance payments, then reconfirm at least 24 hours in advance. Note that most trip-cancellation insurance does not cover Y2K due to its classification as a "known peril."

Foreign Travel and Residence. Investigate before committing to extended travel, particularly overseas. Check foreign travel and residence advisories posted at the State Department's site (<http://travel.state.gov>). Obtain passports and visas prior to Y2K. While the U.S. should be ready, foreign countries may not be as well prepared for Y2K.

Home And Safety

Food Supply. The food industry has made remarkable Y2K progress. However, there may be temporary disruptions in the supply chain, or spoilage due to isolated power failures. Laying in a week's supply of nonperishable foods, bottled water, personal care and household consumable products is recommended. Be alert to "Use By" dates on short shelf-life food products.

Household Appliances. The Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Association (CEMA) states that the vast majority of consumer electronic products are Y2K-safe. Only a few products may be affected, for example, older VCRs or coffee makers with digital clock timers with a date field. Questions should be referred to the manufacturers.

Household Insurance Coverage for Y2K-caused Problems. Homeowner and auto coverage should not change in Y2K, and covered damage from incidents caused by Y2K-related events

UNANNOUNCED JOINT COMMISSION SURVEYS

All Joint Commission standards relate directly or indirectly to patient outcomes and focus on the care of the patient and the management of the organization. The standards help determine how well organizations are actually doing in providing care, not simply what they are capable of doing. Compliance with the standards is assessed by the Joint Commission during an on-site survey that is conducted every three years.

The Joint Commission conducts unannounced surveys on a 5% random sample of accredited organizations. Random unannounced surveys may be conducted 9 to 30 months following the scheduled full survey and there will be no advance notice for random unannounced surveys.

Our three-year scheduled survey was done 10 March 1999. Under this policy of unannounced surveys, our window of opportunity for Naval Medical Clinic Annapolis to be selected for an unannounced survey begins 10 Dec 1999 and continues thru 10 Sept 2001. The scope and focus of review during an unannounced survey will vary from organization to organization and will be based on recommendations made during the previous three-year survey, and other information

regarding the organization's performance. Results of an unannounced survey can affect the organization's current accreditation status.

It is important that we maintain our compliance with the standards and the policies of the clinic. The surveyors assess the most troublesome areas identified by survey data. In the past year that data has shown those areas to be:

- assessment of staff to fulfill their job description and age-specific competence.
- infection control.
- environment of care/emergency preparedness drills/safety.
- credentialing/privileging of physicians.
- prescribing/ordering of medication.

All accredited ambulatory organizations are responsible for meeting the requirements of the current standards. Each staff member has a role in performance improvement and compliance activities. The customers we serve expect us to do the "right things right." And when that happens, the likelihood of bad outcomes is minimized and the potential for good outcomes is optimized.

- Ms. Eva Miler
- Performance Improvement

Getting IG Inspection Ready

Following the March 1999 successful JCAHO survey, the Command continues its momentum for achieving and maintaining inspection ready status. Being inspection ready at all times is the real key to a successful command inspection. Last minute preparations should be a task of the past while maintaining a state of readiness is a task of today.

For the past seven months, the Command has been proactive in ensuring compliance with IG standards. Although a date has not been set for the next IG inspection, the goal is to be inspection ready at all times. Through the assistance of the IG Prep Team (LCDR Paserb, LTJG Wang, HMC Piepho) the Command is being proactive in working towards achieving this goal. The team monitors department head and special assistant compliance of IG standards through distribution and completion of checklists. The checklists, which are in a form of questions, assists department heads and special assistants in identifying areas within their respective areas that comply with IG standards and those areas needing attention. The questions or checklists cover an array of clinical and administrative areas. Based on the feedback received from department heads and special assistants, the IG Prep Team develops a monthly "report card" for the ESC, which reflects the Command's progress towards being inspection ready.

During the last seven months, department heads and special assistants have been enthusiastically working on their checklists. Although the majority of the checklists have been distributed, the work of the IG Prep Team will not end. Continued follow-up with the department heads and special assistants is planned along with practice inspections. Maintaining a state of inspection-ready is not a short-fused task, it is an all hands, everyday task.

- LCDR Theresa Paserb
- IG Inspection Coordinator

CLINIC HAPPENINGS

INTRODUCING

HM3 STUBBS - MIL MED

Good Luck

YN3 RICHARDSON - HC 44

SIGONELA, ITALY

LT WILLIAMS - CIVLANT

"On the Slate"

Training Standdown	Dec 20
Holiday Open House (CO/XO)	Dec 21
Captain's Calls	Jan 10
Martin Luther King Day Federal Holiday	Jan 17
Customer Service Training	Jan 11, 13, 25 or 26

Did you know that all of the Medals of Honor awarded to Navy enlisted personnel during the Korean Conflict were all Navy Corpsmen? See this and many other facts at Corpsman Up!, an independent web page that details the Navy Hospital Corps past and present. Not only does it include history, but contains some advancement information as well. View it by pointing your browser to:

<http://home.coqui.net/skahler/corpsman/index.htm>

Y2K Continued...

should be reimbursed. However, certain problems, such as sewer backup, may require a separate rider, so it is best to check your policy and to contact your insurance company for specific questions.

Personal Computers. Apple Macintosh systems are Y2K compatible. Non-Apple computers built after 1997 should not have Y2K hardware problems. For both hardware and software, check manufacturers' web sites or contact them directly. Many manufacturers' and other Y2K sites offer freeware to resolve Y2K difficulties.

Computer Viruses. Due to the threat of viruses which may execute at midnight, New Year's Eve, and to lessen the chances for Y2K effects, consider turning off your computer before midnight and re-starting it after January 1. The use of virus protection software on personal computers is always a prudent practice.

Home Medical Equipment. If your equipment is leased, call the leasing company. If your equipment is purchased, check for a 1-800 number listed on the equipment and call for information, or check manufacturer's website. If unsuccessful, check the Food and Drug Administration's site (www.fda.gov).

Prescription Drugs. Most pharmaceutical firms have completed upgrading their internal systems. The industry is well organized to function under adverse conditions such as natural disasters or epidemics. Check with local pharmacists about Y2K readiness and contingency plans, and ensure supplies in your hands will last for a week into the new year.

Other Safety Measures. The following steps have been recommended by the American Red Cross:

- Do not use gas-fueled appliances, grills or camp heating devices indoors for heat unless listed with the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) for indoor use.

- Have plenty of flashlights and extra batteries on hand. Do not use candles for emergency lighting.
- Battery-operated smoke alarms: ensure batteries are fresh.
- Hard-wired smoke alarms: inspect to see if they have battery backup. If so, ensure batteries are fresh. If not, buy and install battery-operated alarms.
- Keep a battery-operated radio on hand for emergency notifications.
- If using a portable generator, connect to devices directly, not to home's electrical system.
- If you live in a cold climate, have additional clothing and blankets available should your heat go out.

Once again, take appropriate precautions, don't forget to check on your friends and neighbors and the elderly - and have a Happy New Year!

"Y2K is an inconvenience, not a catastrophe."

- The Honorable Richard Danzig
- Secretary of the Navy
- February 10, 1999

From the Ombudsman's Desk

After a two month break from writing, I have returned. Now that the "Pre-com" process is concluded we can begin to get family time again with the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays approaching. The command Christmas party is scheduled for December 17th. The sight is in a newly renovated section of our very own King Hall called the Chesapeake Severn Room. Please make arrangements to attend, as it promises to be a good time for all. Also for the 100th time in history on December 4th Navy met and BEAT Army. The tickets had been sold out for over a year and of course televised nationally from Philadelphia. Also, The holiday season would not be complete without the production of Handel's Messiah to be performed at the Naval Academy's Main Chapel. See a copy of the Trident for further details. There is also a nominal charge for this event.

Of course there is also the Y 2 K thing that has been lingering in the back of everyone's imagination for

over a year also. Rest assured that the command is well prepared to deal with any situations that may arise. If there is a medical emergency in the family remember to call Tri-Care first. Even if there is a complete failure in CHCS at the command (which has happened before already) we will just go back to hand writing things and making phone calls like we have always done before. Rest assured that your families' medical need will be met!!!

If you find yourself in the fortunate position to have extra time and or money, please remember those who are less fortunate and donate food or money to help with one of your local programs to feed the less fortunate. There are baskets in the clinic to collect nonperishable food items and the Family Service Center on the Naval Station is also collecting items for the holidays. Remember some of the people you help could be your own peers and shipmates.

Finally for all those family members who are going to travel over the holidays, remember to travel smartly

and take your time getting there especially if you are driving to your destination. The next forecasted time to be with your families will not be until after May 2000, after commissioning week!!! Please try hard to take advantage of this opportunity to be with your family. Please have safe and happy holidays.

As always,
Lisa Lane and family

This Date in History

December 20

- 1822 - Congress authorizes the 14-ship West Indies Squadron to suppress piracy in the Caribbean.
- 1941 - Admiral Ernest J. King designated Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet in charge of all operating naval fleets and coastal frontier forces, reporting directly to the President.
- 1989 - Operation Just Cause begins in Panama.
- 1998 - Operation Desert Fox in Iraq ends.